

Report to:	EDGBASTON DISTRICT COMMITTEE
Report of:	EDGBASTON DISTRICT LEAD
Date of Decision:	20TH JULY 2015
SUBJECT:	BEECHES LANE NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM GRANT 2014-15
Key Decision: Yes / No	Relevant Forward Plan Ref:
If not in the Forward Plan: (please "X" box)	Chief Executive approved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	O&S Chairman approved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Type Of Decision:	Local Executive
Relevant Cabinet Member(s):	Councillor Ian Ward – Deputy Leader
Relevant O&S Chairman:	Councillor Waseem Zaffar
Wards Affected:	Quinton Ward

1. Purpose of report:
<p>1.1 The purpose of this report is to receive the annual reports of the Beeches Lane Neighbourhood Forum and to authorise the award of the annual grant of £500 towards the forum administrative costs.</p> <p>1.2 The City Council has supported the establishment of Neighbourhood Forums as a mechanism for ensuring local people can influence the way local decisions are made. The role of the Ward Committee is to consider whether a local Neighbourhood Forum should be recognised for partnership purposes & to approve, if appropriate, a small grant.</p> <p>1.3 This matter was not included in the Forward Plan because it is a local decision.</p>

2. Decision(s) recommended:
<p>2.1 That the District Committee recognises Beeches Lane Neighbourhood Forum and notes their annual report and accounts and request the Neighbourhood Forum to continue to provide representation to Quinton Ward Committee and partnerships as appropriate.</p> <p>2.2 That the District Committee authorise the award of a grant of £500 to be paid from the 2015/16 Neighbourhood Forum Grant budget to Beeches Lane Neighbourhood Forum for the financial year ending 2014/15, to help with running costs. The award of grant is subject to Beeches Lane Neighbourhood Forum meeting the Council's Condition of Grant Aid terms and conditions. This grant comes from the Neighbourhood Forum Mainstream Grants allocation and not Ward Committee allocations.</p> <p>2.3 That the District Committee requests that the Beeches Lane Neighbourhood Forum provides advance notification of its next Annual General Meeting to the Neighbourhood Forums' Link Officer so that assistance can be given in advertising the meeting to all residents</p> <p>2.4 That the District Committee authorise the Neighbourhood Forum Link Officer to process the grant in accordance with Conditions of Grant Aid procedures and the City Council's Financial Regulations, as appropriate.</p>

Lead Contact Officer(s):	Mohammed Irfan: Yardley Neighbourhood Forum Support Officer
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3. Consultation

Consultation should include those that have an interest in the decisions recommended

3.1 Internal

Quinton Ward Elected Members have been properly and meaningfully consulted on this report, together with relevant officers.

3.2 External

Beeches Lane Neighbourhood Forum held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 25th March 2014. Residents from the neighbourhood forum catchment area were invited and the minutes of the AGM are attached. Attendance sheets show that 22 members of the public were in attendance at the AGM.

4. Compliance Issues:

4.1 Are the recommended decisions consistent with the Council's policies, plans and strategies?

This report is in line with Birmingham's Sustainable Community Strategy and the Council Business Plan and Budget 2014 plus

4.2 Financial Implications (Will decisions be carried out within existing finances and Resources?)

Yes. The grant that is payable to the Beeches Lane Neighbourhood Forum and will not come from any ward budget but from a central budget allocation specifically for funding Neighbourhood Forum grant applications. The total grant allocation is £500 which is based on households in the defined forum area.

4.3 Legal Implications

Section 1 Localism Act 2011 gives the City Council a general power of competence where the function is not otherwise prohibited. Ward Committee has the delegated decision-making powers concerning Neighbourhood Forum funding within the Ward under the constitution

4.4 Public Sector Equality Duty

Elected Members are required to have due regard to the Equality Act and to its public sector equality duty.

Neighbourhood forums were established in order to engage with all sections of the local community, each neighbourhood forum is **required** to have an equal opportunities statement contain within their constitution.

5.	Relevant background/chronology of key events:
5.1	Since 1991, when Ward Committees were first established, the City Council has supported the establishment of Neighbourhood Forums as an important mechanism for ensuring that local people can influence the way in which decisions are made for their neighbourhoods. This approach was endorsed by the Local and Neighbourhood Advisory Team (April 2000).
5.2	The role of the Ward Committee is to consider whether the Neighbourhood Forum should be recognised for partnership bodies, and if appropriate confirms an annual grant.
5.3	The Council continue to provide developmental support to Birmingham Neighbourhood Forums and in September 2012 launched "The Know-How Guide for Neighbourhood Forums" which aims to bring together useful information and advice about running a successful Neighbourhood Forum. The guide covers topics such as developing a constitution, keeping in touch with members, running meetings and events, and leading projects and campaigns. The guide is complemented by the website - www.theneighbourhood.info - which provides additional resources for forums, such as template documents for policies and procedures, and information about how to claim a support grant from Birmingham City Council.
5.4	The process for a Neighbourhood Forum to claim a grant has been refreshed in line with the Council's Grant Funding Framework and Toolkit for third sector organisations- mandatory policies & process for awarding grants (April 2011).
	To qualify for a grant Neighbourhood Forums must complete the Neighbourhood Forum's Grant application Form and submit along with requested supporting documents e.g. copy of forum constitution, forum's independently examined accounts, most recent bank statement, approved AGM minutes, equal opportunities policy & safeguarding policy.

6.	Evaluation of alternative option(s):
6.1	The establishment and continuing support of Neighbourhood Forums is consistent with the Council Plan priorities.

7.	Reasons for Decision(s):
7.1	The operation of the Neighbourhood Forum has followed the existing protocol and it is necessary for the ward committee to consider whether it wishes to endorse continued membership bodies and to award a further grant to the Beeches Lane Neighbourhood Forum.

Signatures	<u>Date</u>
Cabinet Member or Executive Member for Local Services or Ward Committee Chairman
Chief Officer:

List of Background Documents used to compile this Report:

- The Establishment of Neighbourhood Forums April 2000
- Neighbourhood Forum Grant Application Form.
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List of Appendices accompanying this Report (if any):

- Constitution
- Map of Forum Area
- Sample Leaflets – Notification of Meeting
- Minutes Of Annual General Meeting(25th March 2014)
- Annual Accounts Year ending 31st December 2014
- Chairman's Annual Report

Report Version	1	Dated	3 rd July 2015
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